

AFFIDAVIT
of
PATRICK SUBLLETTE
MASTER SERGEANT
MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

I, Patrick Sublette, a Master Sergeant with the Missouri State Highway Patrol (“MSHP”), being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

1. I am a peace officer duly commissioned and employed on a full-time basis as a Master Sergeant with the Missouri State Highway Patrol. I have been employed as a full-time law enforcement officer with the Missouri State Highway Patrol since January 2007. I previously worked as an Audrain County, Missouri, Deputy Sheriff from April 1999 to January 2007. I have earned a Master of Science degree in Information Technology/Software Engineering and a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Missouri. I work as investigator with the Missouri State Highway Patrol and my duties and responsibilities included conducting criminal investigations on individuals and businesses for violations of the state laws of Missouri, particularly those which use computers to facilitate crimes. During the course of my employment, I have attended various computer crime investigation courses involving computer crimes, undercover operations, seizure and forensic examination of computers. This is not all of the training I have received, only some of the training. During this time, I have assisted in the investigation of numerous serious and violent crimes, including child pornography and child exploitation cases. These investigations include, but are not limited to, interviewing suspects and witnesses, executing search warrants, reviewing and analyzing documents and records, executing arrest warrants, and/or securing seized evidence.

2. The facts in this Affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other officers and witnesses. Based upon the following information, there is probable cause to believe that the defendant committed the offense of knowing distribution and receipt of visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(2) and 2256, and possession of child pornography, in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 2252(a)(4)(B). The description of CSAM, or child sexual abuse material

3. “Child pornography,” or “Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)” as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256(8), is any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where (a) the production of the visual depiction involved the use of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct, (b) the visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct, or (c) the visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

4. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) maintains a Cyber Tip Line and it serves as a nationwide centralized reporting system for instances of child exploitation. On May 11, 2022, Jason Wiley, an employee of MeWe, made a report. MeWe is a social media network, similar to Facebook, but claims to focus on data privacy. The tip indicated that a MeWe account registered to “Robert Stone”, username roberstone18, with an email address of hrider909@gmail.com had uploaded three files to the platform that were suspected CSAM.

5. On June 7, 2023, NCMEC sent the report to the Camden County Sheriff's Office, and an investigation began. A search warrant was issued to MeWe. Two Android phones were connected to the "Robert Stone" account, as well as the Gmail address previously noted, and the account was a member of several sexually themed social groups, including "Suckthesmallones."

6. Subpoenas to Google and Charter Communications indicated that the Gmail account was associated with a number of IP addresses in the Osage Beach/Camdenton area, including an IP subscriber named Marie Skinner, 157 Angel Drive, Camdenton, later identified as the defendant's wife and that address as their shared home. The customer profile for "hdrider909@gmail.com" indicated that the person creating the account provided the following information: Darrin Skinner, 512 Angel Dr, Camdenton, MO 65020. The Mid-States Organized Crime Information center (MOCIC) advised the investigating officer that the email address "hdrider909@gmail.com" was frequently used by Defendant, including in an Instagram account with his photo as the profile picture.

7. Defendant received notice of the Google subpoena for "hdrider909@gmail.com" and contacted Camden County Sheriff about it, further demonstrating his connection to this email address. It should also be noted that prior to Camden County, Defendant had worked at Osage Beach as a police officer where his badge number was 909. At the time this investigation began, Defendant was employed by Camden County as a deputy sheriff, and was assigned as School Resource Officer at Macks Creek School District.

8. Because of Defendant's connection to the Camden County Sheriff's Office, the case was taken over by the Missouri State Highway Patrol's Special Victims Unit (SVU), which was formally known as the Digital Forensic Investigative Unit (DFIU) on or about August 1, 2023. DFIU executed a search warrant of Defendant's home and Defendant agreed to be interviewed.

9. During the interview, Defendant admitted that the “Robert Stone” MeWe account was his and that he had received images of nude and clothed females aged 14-15 during chats on MeWe. Defendant denied sending any images or soliciting images. Defendant’s phone was searched, and no CSAM was found. The case was completed and sent to the Camden County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office (PA) for review.

10. As part of the review process, the PA determined that MeWe’s initial response to the search warrant was incomplete. MeWe had preserved all of its records and complied with the second search warrant. At this time, investigators learned that MeWe had made a prior report to the Cyber Tip Line in 2020 for an account also associated with the email address “hdrider909@gmail.com.” The “Robert Stone” account was created on October 2, 2020, and included a text sent by “Robert Stone” that read: “let’s try this again. Got deleted, was Hard Rider. Feel free to add me.”

11. A review of the complete MeWe records revealed multiple images of child sexual abuse, with Defendant disseminating over a dozen through the chat feature. Images were identified as being sent on multiple occasions, including May 28, 2022 to June 28, 2022. At least eight of the involved images included minors under the age of 12, with one picture involving a pre-school age child. In addition to CSAM, Defendant also shared a number of photos of prepubescent girls identified as being from the community with other users of the MeWe platform. He cropped and adjusted these images to be more sexually suggestive. No local minors were contained in the CSAM images, and the defendant had not interacted with the local minors. It is believed he obtained some of these photos of local minors from social media since the minors were in gymnastics or dance clothes associated with a Show Me Athletics of Osage Beach, Missouri, a local gymnastics studio. The non-CSAM and CSAM images were exchanged as part of sexually charged chats between the Defendant’s account and other MeWe users accounts.

12 The facts set forth in this affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Further, Affiant sayeth not.



**Patrick Sublette
Master Sergeant
Missouri State Highway Patrol**

Attested to in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone or other reliable electronic means on this the 8th day of May 2024.



Sarah W. Hays
United States ~~Chief~~ Magistrate Judge